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C O N F I D E N T I A L HARARE 000931

SIPDIS

STATE FOR P: U/S GROSSMAN, D AND AF A A/S SNYDER  
NSC FOR AFRICA DIRECTOR

E.O. 12958: DECL: 06/04/2014

TAGS: [PREL](#) [Z1](#)

SUBJECT: CONSOLIDATION OF MUGABE REGIME REPRESSION  
CONTINUES: HOW WILL WE RESPOND?

REF: A. (A) HARARE 882

[1](#)B. (B) PRETORIA 2332

[1](#)C. (C) MASERU 323

[1](#)D. (D) HARARE 541

[1](#)E. (E) PRETORIA 1338

Classified By: JOSEPH G. SULLIVAN FOR REASONS 1.5, B AND D

1.(C) Over the past two months, as reported by post, the Mugabe regime has made it crystal clear that it has no intention of engaging in serious dialogue with the domestic opposition; that it is committed to manipulating food supplies, utilizing intimidation and its control of the electoral machinery to secure a crushing victory in the March 2005 parliamentary elections. The Regime increasingly disregards any court orders it dislikes and is systematically shutting down local governments controlled by the MDC. Mugabe publicly stated his intention to renege on previous commitments to dialogue with the opposition in his Sky News interview reported ref A. The GOZ's putative efforts to stabilize the economy remain subject to political and self-interest, as demonstrated by ongoing seizures of the small remaining number of white-owned commercial farms, notwithstanding the negative effect this will have on food production and economic productivity.

[1](#)2. (C) Mugabe's SADC neighbors still have taken no steps, by word or deed, to prevent Mugabe from consolidating his repressive rule. Indeed, Mugabe is counting on their acquiescence to legitimize any and all steps he takes under an increasingly thin veneer of legality. Ref C reveals how Mugabe has successfully turned a SADC effort to address Zimbabwe's crisis into a series of visits by heads of government which, whatever is said in private, will be portrayed as recognition of, and applause for the Mugabe regime.

[1](#)3. (C) We recommended in ref D steps we can take to help stimulate African engagement in addressing Zimbabwe's growing crisis, and thus make our own and the EU's words and actions more effective in countering Mugabe's claim of African solidarity for his regime in its "war" with the West. While we have only modest hope that our efforts can persuade key Africans to press Mugabe more effectively or that he will respond, even if pressed, we believe that our effort is important and should be tried urgently before Zimbabwe slips even further toward total dictatorship and failed state status.

[1](#)4. (C) Action requested: We urge that steps be taken promptly to implement US engagement with African states on Zimbabwe, as well as intensify our own actions toward promoting positive change in Zimbabwe.  
SULLIVAN